

# Appendix C – Planning Team Meeting Summary

Over the duration of the General Management Planning process, the Planning Team held three on-site team meetings and three virtual meetings. These meetings were critical to the development of the General Management Plan and particularly the creation of the 20-Year Management Zones and the 10-Year Action Goals. Additionally, the meetings were an opportunity to review input received from stakeholders and the public.

## **Overview of Planning Team Meetings**

- **Team Meeting #1 (April 9, 2014)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn, the kick-off meeting was an opportunity for Planning Team members to introduce themselves to one another, review the General Management Plan schedule, tour the park (led by Jim O'Brien) discuss the park and its significance, and review the Supporting Analysis.
- **Team Meeting #2 (July 29, 2014)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn, the Planning Team reviewed significance statements, reviewed the public input meeting outcomes, reviewed the current farming contract, reviewed the Supporting Analysis and developed draft 20-year management zones. The Team also discussed appropriate questions for the public input survey.
- **Team Meeting #3 (September 4, 2014)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn, the Planning Team reviewed the Supporting Analysis, discussed the park's boundary, reviewed the Management Zone Map, and brainstormed Action Goals.
- **Team Meeting #4, (October 2, 2014)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn, the Planning Team reviewed and finalized the Significance Statements, Supporting Analysis and the Management Zone Map. The 10-year Action Goals were reviewed and revised in preparation for the November 10th Stakeholder Input Open House.
- **Team Meeting #5, (November 10, 2014)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn immediately following the Stakeholder Input Open House, the Planning Team reviewed input and comments received. The Planning Team discussed the input and revised the draft action goals as needed in preparation for the January Public Input Open House.
- **Team Meeting #6, Go-To-Meeting (March 16, 2015)** – Located at the Coldwater Hampton Inn, the Planning Team reviewed input and comments received at the Public Input meeting and via Email. Minor changes and corrections were made to the plan.



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **KICK-OFF MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday April 9, 2014, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**  
Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd., Coldwater

- 1) Welcome and Introductions – 5 minutes
- 2) Review of Management Planning Process – Debbie Jensen, 15 minutes
- 3) Review of Management Plan Schedule – Debbie Jensen, 10 minutes
- 4) Coldwater Lake State Park Overview – Jim O'Brien, 15 minutes
- 5) Supporting Analysis Review – Planning Team, 1 hour
- 6) Significant Features Exercise – Planning Team, 45 minutes

**Lunch and stakeholder discussion, 1 hour**

- 7) Planning for Public Meeting – 30 minutes
- 8) Park Tour – 2-2.5 hours



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #1 NOTES Wednesday April 9, 2014, 9-3pm Hampton Inn, Coldwater**

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Matt Lincoln, Jim O'Brien, Ray Fahlsing, Brian Gunderman, Sgt. Joe Kellam, Mark Sargent, Russ Hickey. (Debra Yee and Bud Norman were present for the introductions)

#### **Welcome and Introductions**

- Introductions and titles were shared – see attached Planning Team list

#### **Review of Management Planning Process**

- Debbie gave a review of the process used to develop management plans.
- Explained that this one will be slightly different since we will be inviting the public to participate in a visioning workshop early in the process.

#### **Park Overview and Background**

- Jim presented background information on the park including location, park purchase history, current uses (including hunting, fishing, equestrian) and details of the farming lease.
- Discussed challenges associated with Recreation Passport enforcement at this location.
- It was noted that this is the only public land open to hunting in Branch County and there is none in neighboring Calhoun County.

#### **Supporting Analysis Review**

Matt presented the supporting analysis. Specific discussions included:

- Park Setting
  - Part of the chain of lakes which is around 2,500 acres of water in the St. Joseph River Watershed
  - 7 miles from the Indiana State Line
  - 9 miles from the City of Coldwater
- Park History
  - 2 farmhouses were demolished shortly after acquiring the property
  - Parking lots are in approximate locations of the farmsteads and were renovated/improved in 2013
- Land Ownership
  - Add paragraph about MNRTF restrictions
  - Verify location of easement from Consumers
  - Farm Lease
    - Current contract expires November 2014 – new terms need to be confirmed.
    - Discussion on long term goal to phase out farming.
    - The farmer would like to add irrigation - water draw issues in the watershed
  - Use Permit
    - Kinder Hook Riding Club has a use permit to ride horses on 2-tracks or along the field boundaries between January 1 and April 15. Renewed annually.



- Area Recreation Resources
  - Details of BAS on Coldwater Lake discussed
  - Fort Custer is the closest State Park to Coldwater, still over 30 miles away.
  - Pokagon State Park is 20 minutes away; has a lodge that sells out quickly.
  - Discussion of water quality at area beaches - improves as you go north on the chain of lakes.
- Natural Resources
  - Input needed from Stewardship, Wildlife and Fisheries
  - Fishing in the County is a draw for out of state visitors
- Historic/Cultural
  - Add Native American occupation potential in upland areas along the lakeshore
- Mapping
  - Check dedicated boundary for expansion opportunities
  - Add park boundary to lake bottom map. Brian to look into a getting a better map (or GIS data).
  - Include map that illustrates the development around the lake shoreline

### **Discussion on Park Potential**

- Russ shared his vision for the park including trail development and trail shelters
- Discussion of possible beach activities at the park and incorporating the BAS
- Other possibilities discussed: fishing pier, dispersed camping, interpretation, carry-down canoe/kayak launch
- Discussion on expansion of the park boundary to the east
- Discussion of farm lease and possible phasing it out
- Potential for party spot if easily accessible from the water

### **Significance Statement**

- Debbie lead the discussion on what makes the park significant
  - Diverse wetland with native plants and habitat for wetland species
  - 6,600 feet of undeveloped shoreline on the largest chain of lakes in the county (boat and shore fishing)
  - Only public land open to hunting within a 45 mile radius
  - Easy access from I-69
  - Low amount of invasive species provides an opportunity for re-establishing an ecosystem in partnership with Wildlife

### **Stakeholder List**

- The stakeholder list was reviewed
- Russ to get local municipality contacts for the list

### **Public Meeting Planning**

- Public Visioning workshop scheduled for Thursday, May 15 from 6 to 8pm (*note, this has since been rescheduled for June 17<sup>th</sup>*).
- Russ to find a venue and confirm
- Debbie is coordinating a facilitator



### **Site Visit**

The meeting was followed by a site visit. Items noted included the following:

- Potential for trail development
- The lake bottom along the park shoreline is generally firm
- Limited opportunities for good shore fishing (shallow water)
- Hunting blinds and tree stands are on the property
- Some unapproved maintenance (grass cutting/clearing)
- Evidence of “partying” in the woods (beer cans)



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #2 AGENDA**

9 am to 2 pm

9) Review of Kick-off Meeting Minutes – 5 minutes

10) Supporting Analysis follow-up – 15 minutes

11) Public Input Meeting Summary discussion – 20 minutes

12) Significance Statements review – 30 minutes

13) Management Zoning activity – 1 hour

14) Review of online survey – 45 minutes

Lunch 12:00 - 1:00pm

15) Brainstorm Action Items – 1 hour



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #2 NOTES Tuesday July 29, 2014, 9-1pm Hampton Inn, Coldwater**

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Murdock Jemerson, Joe Strach, Jim O'Brien, Ray Fahlsing, Brian Gunderman, Debra Yee.

#### **Review of April Meeting Notes**

- No comments or corrections were made
- Some follow-up items were noted related to mapping

#### **Farming Contract Update**

- The farming lease has been rebid on a 3 year term with possible 1 year extensions
- 20 acres has been removed from the contract beginning in 2016. The DNR is working with Pheasants Forever on planting these 20 acres to native grassland. If this does not happen the land can return to farming. Atrazine will not be used on this land in 2015.
- Native grassland establishment will take 2-3 years

#### **Supporting Analysis Review**

Team members were asked to review the revised Supporting Analysis.

The following comments/additions were made:

- Fishing
  - Fisheries has been stocking Coldwater Lake with walleye. However, these have not been showing up in the fishing surveys and stocking habits may be adjusted in the future.
  - Pike and bass are popular fish species.
  - Tip-up festival in January
- Debra reported that there is a new privately run equestrian park off 86
- Information on the number of seasonal residents in the area should be incorporated

#### **Public Input Meeting Summary**

The Summary from the public input workshop was reviewed. It was noted that the attendees represented a narrow demographic (mostly over 50). The survey will attempt to reach out to a wider cross-section of the community.

#### **Significance Statements Review**

- Additional information should be added to the Park Purpose relating to the MNRTF purchase of the land
- It was noted that there is other hunting land in the tri-county area – Leidy Lake Game Area in St. Joseph County. This statement will be corrected.
- The scenic, undeveloped shoreline statement should be moved up above the wetlands.
- Accessibility/location should be incorporated into the other statements.
- The final statement regarding “undeveloped land” should be deleted.



### **Review of Draft online Survey**

The draft online survey was reviewed and many edits were made. New questions were added regarding:

- Do you currently have a Recreation Passport?
- Where do you currently recreate the most?
- How do you currently access Coldwater Lake?
- What level of development would you like to see at the park?

Advertising for the survey was discussed. The DNR will issue a press release. Debra offered to put a link to the survey on the CVB website.

### **Management Zone Activity**

The planning team divided into two groups and developed draft zoning maps for the park. These maps will be drawn up and discussed at the next meeting. The possibility of presenting two alternatives to the public was discussed.

### **Action Items**

The following action items were discussed:

- Partnerships (Pheasants Forever, Birders)
- Habitat restoration plan
- Accessible hunting opportunities
- Trail system

It was determined that this discussion would continue once the preliminary survey results are available for review.

### **Next Meeting**

- The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday September 4 from 9:30am to 12pm at the Hampton Inn





**COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK  
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN  
MEETING #3 AGENDA**

Thursday September 4, 2014  
9:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd. Coldwater

- 1) Review of July Meeting Minutes – 5 minutes
- 2) Supporting Analysis Follow-up – 10 minutes
- 3) Purpose and Significance Statements Review – 15 minutes
- 4) Online Survey Summary Discussion – 20 minutes
- 5) Management Zone Review – 1 hour
- 6) Brainstorm Action Items – 1 hour
- 7) Stakeholder/Public Meetings – 10 minutes



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #3 NOTES**

**Thursday September 4, 2014, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Hampton Inn, Coldwater**

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Murdock Jemerson, Jim O'Brien, Matt Lincoln, Ray Fahlsing, Brian Gunderman, Mark Sargent, Debra Yee, Russ Hickey.

#### **Review of July Meeting Notes**

- Typo under Supporting Analysis, Fishing: "However, these have **NOT** been showing up....."
- Need to follow up on number of seasonal residents in the County

#### **Supporting Analysis Review**

- Debbie will e-mail out supporting analysis
- Jim provided information on the new farm lease
  - 3 year contract with a renewal option for up to 4 years
  - 241 acres total will be farmed for first year
  - 25 acres will be removed from contract for native grass restoration if it becomes an opportunity after that first year
  - Current lessee will work with DNR in phasing out farming.
- Campgrounds: Debra Yee will e-mail Debbie a list of private campgrounds
- Golf Course: **Iyopawa** spelled wrong
- Marinas: Debra will e-mail Debbie a list
- DNR Boating Access Sites: elaborate on what the Coldwater Lake BAS offers, including parking. 5 of the 16 state owned BAS in the County are on the Chain of Lakes.
- State Game Areas: list for adjacent Counties, including acreage.(St. Joseph, Hillsdale) but note that there is none in Branch County
- Land Cover: clarify if wetlands have been drained in the park or in the area.
- Wildlife: Mark will provide information for paragraph on p 18.
- Mute swan control is taking place in two twps. – include if the park is within either of these twps. DNR is also actively controlling mute swans.
- Issues and Opportunities: Rec. Passport purchase opportunities needs clarification. Jim to suggest new verbage for this item
- Fishing: Change to "Coldwater Lake is one of the **most popular** fishing lakes in the region." "Redear" should be one word.
- Lake bottom conditions should be lowercase.
- Team members were asked to review the supporting analysis and let Debbie know if there are any other corrections/ gaps.



## **Purpose and Significance Statements Review**

Change "...to provide **an outdoor** recreation facility...." under Park Purpose

## **Online Survey Summary Discussion**

The preliminary online survey results were reviewed.

- Again, participants represent an older demographic
- It was suggested that moderate and low level development could probably be combined when looking at the examples listed
- Further analysis will be undertaken once the survey has been closed
- It was noted that the survey generally reflects what was gathered at the public meeting

## **Acres Land Trust Meeting Recap**

Jim discussed a meeting with Acres Land Trust that occurred last week. The organization is based out of Indiana. They are interested in acquiring the adjacent property on the east side of Coldwater Lake State Park and partnering with the DNR on this purchase and/or the management of the park.

## **Boundary Discussion**

A discussion was held regarding the proposed park boundary. It was explained that this is a 20 year outlook based on a willing buyer/ willing seller.

- The boundary should include all undeveloped land to the east of park, around Little Coldwater Lake and up to Quimby Road.
- Expanding the project boundary to include undeveloped land to the west was also discussed.
- PRD will communicate with adjacent landowners (Land Liaison to send letters) before project boundaries are publically released.

## **Management Zone Review**

The planning team reviewed the 2 maps created at the last meeting. Option 1 was modified and zoning will be added to the land within the proposed project boundary.

## **Brainstorm Action Items**

Action goals were identified and will be refined again at the next meeting.

## **Next Meeting**

Thursday October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014, at 9:30am at the Hampton Inn.

## **Stakeholder/Public Meetings**

The Stakeholder Meeting will be scheduled for the end of October or early November at the Coldwater Executive Suites.



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #4 AGENDA**

Thursday October 2, 2014

9:30 am to 12:30 pm

Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd. Coldwater

- 1) Review of September Meeting Minutes – 5 minutes
- 2) Supporting Analysis follow up – 5 minutes
- 3) Purpose and Significance Statements Review – 5 minutes
- 4) Online Survey Summary Discussion – 15 minutes
- 5) Management Zone Review and Project Boundary discussion – 1 hour
- 6) Review Action Items – 1 hour
- 7) Planning for Stakeholder meeting – 30 minutes



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #4 NOTES**

Thursday October 2, 2014, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm  
Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd. Coldwater

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Murdock Jemerson, Jim O'Brien, Matt Lincoln, Ray Fahlsing, Brian Gunderman, Mark Sargent, Debra Yee, Russ Hickey, Kelly Shinabargar (PRD student intern)

#### **Review of September Meeting Notes**

- No corrections or changes were made

#### **Supporting Analysis follow up**

- Additional information has been collected on supporting analysis, but has not yet been incorporated
- Ray will look into whether the farm land is tiled

#### **Purpose and Significance Statements Review**

- This will be presented as written at the upcoming stakeholder meeting.

#### **Online Survey Summary Discussion**

- Survey analysis was presented and discussed.
- Zip code map will be circulated. It showed a diverse area of where people live.
- The team was asked to review the analysis within the next week and forward any comments to Debbie so she can make changes before posting on the project website.

#### **Management Zone Review and Project Boundary discussion**

- The width of the Scenic Zone was discussed. It was determined to leave it as shown.
- The zoning of the upland "island" within the wetland was discussed and it was determined to leave it as primitive to keep the integrity of the wetland area. Potential exists for viewing opportunities outside of this area.
- Revisit the zoning within the proposed project boundary.
- Consider taking the proposed boundary to the Copeland and Quimby corner.
- Include in the report that if adjacent land becomes available, DNR would be open to acquiring the land to expand the size of the park due to the lack of public land in the area and the park's small size.
- Have a separate map that shows the proposed boundary for the public meetings.

#### **Review Action Items**

The Action Goals were reviewed and changes made.

#### **Planning for Stakeholder meeting**

- Stakeholder invitations will be sent out, along with personal calls to ensure that the key stakeholders will be there.
- Stakeholder Meeting at Hampton Inn
- Date: Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. 2pm-4pm, debriefing team meeting afterwards.
- Public meeting will be in January with a back-up date determined because of weather.



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #5 NOTES**

Monday November 10, 2014, 5:00 p.m.  
Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd. Coldwater

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Murdock Jemerson, Jim O'Brien, Ray Fahlsing, Brian Gunderman, Mark Sargent, Debra Yee, Russ Hickey, Kelly Shinabargar (PRD student intern)

#### **Review of Stakeholder Comments**

- A discussion was held regarding the sentiment expressed by some individuals at the meeting that they had not been kept well informed of the planning process. Publication of the Public Meeting and Draft Plan review will be very important.
- The priority stickers were reviewed and no changes were made
- Comments were reviewed and no changes were made
- Include no-wake map in Supporting Analysis.

#### **Presentation Discussion**

- It was suggested that the presentation be adjusted to show the evolution of the plan in response to the public input received.
- Include a pie-chart regarding state park funding.

#### **Public Input Meeting**

- The meeting will be scheduled in January
- Debra will look for a location

#### **Next Steps**

- The team was asked to review the draft plan and supporting analysis and get all comments to Debbie ASAP.
- Debbie will present the plan to PRD Section Chiefs prior to full public review.



## **COLDWATER LAKE STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **MEETING #6 NOTES**

Monday March 16, 2015, 1:30 p.m.  
Hampton Inn, 391 N. Willowbrook Rd. Coldwater

**Attendees:** Debbie Jensen, Murdock Jemerson, Jim O'Brien, Ray Fahlsing, Matt Lincoln, Debra Yee, Russ Hickey,

#### **Review of Stakeholder Meeting Notes**

- Some corrections and additions were made to the Public Input Open House notes to more accurately reflect the conversations at the meeting.

#### **Review of Stakeholder Comments**

- The Action Goal priority stickers were reviewed. It was noted that those with an equestrian interest each put multiple stickers on the equestrian trail item.
- Negative stickers that did not include an explanation were not considered.
- Written comments were reviewed. It was determined that a statement would be added to the plan to make it clear that a motorized boat launch is NOT included in the plan since this accounts for a large number of public concerns.

#### **Review of Action Goals**

- Some minor adjustments were made to clarify/ refine the action goals.

#### **Next Steps**

- The plan will be presented to DNR management staff and the Michigan State Park Advisory Committee before going to the Director for his signature.
- Development of a park concept plan and a stewardship plan will be the next steps in guiding the future of the park.